



# APPENDIX 3

## CULTURAL HUMILITY BEST PRACTICES

Cultural humility is an attitude of humility and respect toward other cultures that pushes one to challenge their own cultural biases, realize they cannot possibly know everything about other cultures and approach learning about other cultures as a lifelong goal and process. Not to be confused with the concept of cultural competency, which may implicitly place non-western cultures as “other” cultures that can possibly be mastered with enough effort. The following non-exhaustive list contains a set of best practices that should be considered and employed by CNRA and department staff to effectively practice cultural humility.

**Be a good guest:** If you are visiting a tribal community or space, understand that you are a guest—observe and ask questions humbly, when necessary, but remember that you are not entitled to know everything about the community.

**Listen and observe** more than you speak—learn to be comfortable with long pauses in conversation and narrative-style communication.

**Give your full attention** to the meeting participants. Do not multitask, email, text, or take other calls during a meeting with tribes.

**Be honest and clear** about what you are doing. Do not make promises you do not intend to or cannot keep.

**Practice respectful body language:** Preferred body language, posture and concept of personal space depend on the community norms and nature of the personal relationship—observe others and allow them to initiate or ask for physical contact.

**Try not to take things personally:** You may experience people expressing their mistrust, frustration, or disappointment from situations outside your control. Learn not to take it personally.

**Properly honor elders:** Elders or cultural practitioners are often asked to offer such opening and/or closing words and are given a small gift as a sign of respect (honoraria are common). Remember that many elders and cultural practitioners are taking time away from their jobs, families, or communities to offer prayers or blessings at State events—please be sure to accommodate their needs where possible.

**Show humility:** If community members tease you, understand that this can indicate rapport-building.

**Respect confidentiality** and the right of the tribe to control information and data. Where confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, be explicit about such limitations. Never use information gained without a tribe’s expressed written consent and clarify whether the tribe has agreed to be identified.

**Avoid intrusive questions** (cultural, personal, etc.). Be careful not to impose your personal values, morals, or beliefs.

**Explain or limit the use of acronyms.**

**Be self-aware:** Moderate the tone and speed of your voice when speaking. Tribes may be especially sensitive to government representatives speaking too loud and fast.